

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-46, 50, and 52-103 are pending in this application. Claims 22-44 and 67-100 have been withdrawn.

In the Office Action dated November 14, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-21, 45-46, 50, 52-66, and 101-103. In particular, claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by EP 1 005 978 A2. In addition, claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-21, 45-46, 50, 52-66 and 101-103 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,692,681 B1 ("Lunde") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,851,336 ("Cundiff et al.") and in further view of EP 0 786 330 A2. The Examiner also rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 1 005 978 A2 in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,023,041 ("Jones et al."). Additionally, claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cundiff et al. in view of EP 0 786 330 A2. The Examiner further rejected claims 1-3, 7-8, 12, 14-21, 45-46, 50, 52, 57-66, and 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,638,466 B1 ("Abbott") in view of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in further view of EP 1 005 978 A2. In addition, claims 9-10, 13, 53-55, and 101-102 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abbott in view of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in further view of EP 1 005 978 A2 and "Lunde." The Examiner also rejected claims 9 and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abbott in view of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in further view of EP 1 005 978 A2 and Jones et al. Finally, claims 54-56 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Abbott in view of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in further view of EP 1 005 978 A2, Jones et al., and Lunde.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for conducting an interview to discuss the pending claims on April 11, 2006, as summarized in the Interview Summary issued on that date.

As indicated above, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 45 and canceled claim 103. Applicants respectfully request that in light of this amendment and the remarks below that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-21, 45, 46, 50, 52-66, and 101-102 and allow those claims to proceed to issue.

**Rejection of Claims 1-2, 7-8, 15-17 Over EP 1 005 978 A2**

In order to anticipate claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17, EP 1 005 978 A2 must disclose each and every element of the rejected claims. MPEP § 2131 (8th Ed., revised August 2005). As indicated above, Applicants have amended claim 1 (from which claims 2, 7-8, and 15-17 depend). Because EP 1 005 978 A2 does not disclose the now-amended limitation of “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section” of claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17 Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

EP 1 005 978 A2 discloses the sealing of core material by placement of a resin film directly on the surface of the core. (¶¶ [0013]-[0018]). The resin film of EP 1 005 978 A2 may contain fibers or glass micro-balloons to increase the viscosity of the resin film, but, as acknowledged by the Examiner during the interview, the resin film of EP 1 005 978 A2 is not a “substantially fibrous support layer.” Moreover, air cannot be evacuated through a resin film, such as that used in EP 1 005 978 A2. Thus, as the Examiner acknowledged, because the resin film is applied directly to the surface of the

core material, air cannot be evacuated from the core after application of the film.

Therefore, EP 1 005 978 A2 also does not disclose a layer of any material that “provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section.”

Thus, because EP 1 005 978 A2 does not disclose “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section,” Applicants respectfully request that Examiner withdraw this rejection of claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17.

**Rejection of Claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-21, 45-46, 50, 52-66, and 101-103 Under § 103(a) Over Lunde in view of Cundiff and in further view of EP 0 786 330 A2**

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the MPEP requires that the Examiner demonstrate (1) some suggestion or motivation to modify the reference or combine reference teachings; (2) a reasonable expectation of success; and (3) that the prior art references teach or suggest all the claim limitations. MPEP § 2142 (8th Ed., revised Aug. 2005). A *prima facie* case of obviousness of claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-21, 45-46, 50, 52-66, and 101-102<sup>1</sup> cannot be established based on Lunde, Cundiff, and EP 0 786 330 A2, because these references do not teach or suggest the limitation of “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section” of claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-21, 45-46, 50, 52-66, and 101-102, as amended. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

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<sup>1</sup> Because claim 103 has been canceled, the rejection of that claim is now moot.

Cundiff discloses sealing a core by placement of an adhesive film directly on the surface of the core material followed by placement of a layer of prepreg material on the adhesive film. (Col. 7-8.) The adhesive film and prepreg material are then cured to seal the core material. (*Id.*) As acknowledged by the Examiner during the interview, air cannot be evacuated through the adhesive film disclosed in Cundiff. Thus, as was further acknowledged by the Examiner, because the adhesive film is applied directly to the surface of the core material, air cannot be evacuated from the core after application of the film. Therefore, Cundiff does not disclose "applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section."

Similarly, EP 0 786 330 A2 discloses sealing of a core by application of an adhesive film directly on a surface of the core and then applying a barrier film over the adhesive film. (Page 4, l. 10-18.) As with Cundiff, the application of an adhesive film directly to the surface of the core material, prevents air from being evacuated from the core material. Therefore, EP 0 786 330 A2 also does not disclose "applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section."

Finally, the Examiner acknowledges that Lunde provides no teaching of the sealing of core material at all, let alone "applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core

section.” (Office Action at 4.) Therefore, none of the cited references teach or suggest this limitation of the claims, as amended, either alone or in combination. For at least this reason, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-3, 7-10, 12-21, 45-46, 50, 52-66, and 101-102 be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claim 9 under § 103(a) Over EP 1 005 978 A2 in View of Jones et al.**

Applicants also believe that the § 103(a) rejection of claim 9 over EP 1 005 978 A2 in view of Jones et al is improper. Specifically, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been demonstrated because neither of these cited references teaches or suggests the claim limitation of “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section,” alone or in combination. As discussed above, EP 1 005 978 A2 does not teach this limitation. And, Jones et al. does not disclose this limitation and the Examiner has not pointed to any subject matter in Jones et al. for any alleged teaching of a support layer. Therefore, because the Examiner cannot show that these references teach all the elements of claim 9, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 9 be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17 Under § 103(a)  
Over Cundiff in view of EP 0 786 330 A2**

For the reasons explained above, Applicants also do not believe that the Examiner has demonstrated a *prima facie* case of obviousness of claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17 over Cundiff in view of EP 0 786 330 A2. Specifically, as set forth above, neither Cundiff nor EP 0 786 330 A2 discloses “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on

at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section.” Therefore, since neither of the references teaches all the elements of claims 1-2, 7-8, and 15-17, either alone or in combination, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims 1-3, 7-8, 12, 14-21, 45-46, 50, 52, 57-66, and 103  
Under § 103(a) Over Abbott in view of EP 0 786 330 A2 and EP 1 005 978 A2**

A *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established for claims 1-3, 7-8, 12, 14-21, 45-46, 50, 52, 57-66, and 103 based on Abbott, EP 0 786 330 A2, and EP 1 005 978 A2. Specifically, these references do not teach or suggest all the limitations of these claims either alone or in combination. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw these rejections.

As discussed above, EP 0 786 330 A2 and EP 1 005 978 A2 do not teach or suggest “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section.” Similarly, the Examiner acknowledges that Abbott does not disclose the application of a support layer to a core section. (Office Action at 11.)

Since none of the cited references teach or suggest all the limitations of the claims either alone or in combination, a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established. Therefore, because a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established for claims 1-3, 7-8, 12, 14-21, 45-46, 50, 52, and 57-66 over the cited

references, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims 9-10, 13, 53-55, and 101-102 under § 103(a) Over Abbott in View of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in Further View of EP 1 005 978 A2 and Lunde**

Applicants also respectfully assert that claims 9-10, 13, 53-55, and 101-102 are not obvious over Abbott in view of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in further view of EP 1 005 978 A2 and Lunde. Specifically, none of these references teach “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section,” as recited in the subject claims. As discussed above, this limitation is absent from Abbott, EP 0 786 330 A2, EP 1 005 978 A2, and Lunde. Therefore, because a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established for claims 9-10, 13, 53-55, and 101-102 over the cited references, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims 9 and 53 under § 103(a) Over Abbott in View of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in Further View of EP 1 005 978 A2 and Jones et al.**

Applicants further respectfully assert that the § 103(a) rejection of claims 9 and 53 over Abbott in view of EP 0 786 330 A2, and in further view of EP 1 005 978 A2 and Jones et al is improper. Specifically, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been demonstrated because none of the cited references teaches or suggests the claim limitation of “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section.” As discussed above, this limitation is absent from Abbott, EP 0 786 330 A2, EP 1 005 978 A2, and Jones et al.

either alone or in combination. Therefore, because a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established for claims 9 and 53 over the cited references, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

**Rejection of Claims 54-56 under § 103(a) Over Abbott in View of EP 0 786 330 A2 and in Further View of EP 1 005 978 A2, Jones et al., and Lunde**

Additionally, Applicants respectfully assert that the § 103(a) rejection of claims 54-56 over Abbott, EP 0 786 330 A2, EP 1 005 978 A2, Jones et al., and Lunde is improper. Specifically, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been demonstrated because none of the cited references teaches or suggests the claim limitation of “applying a substantially fibrous support layer on at least one of the first side and the second side of the core section, wherein the substantially fibrous support layer provides a vacuum path for evacuation of the core section.” As discussed above, this limitation is absent from Abbott, EP 0 786 330 A2, EP 1 005 978 A2, Jones et al., and Lunde either alone or in combination. Therefore, because a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be established for claims 54-56 over the cited references, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

**Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.



Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: April 21, 2006

  
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